

Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) Meeting Summary

June 22, 2017 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM

MassDEP, One Winter Street, Boston, MA

MassDEP Updates

Sean Sylver of MassDEP informed attendees of the upcoming application deadline for [Recycling Business Development Grants](#). The [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program \(SMRP\)](#) grant application period also recently closed, with a record number of municipalities submitting applications. Finally, MassDEP and RecyclingWorks engaged multiple sectors on the topic of source reduction of food waste at the recent [College & University Recycling Forum](#) at Smith College and at the spring [WasteWise Forum](#) at Gillette Stadium.

C&D Subcommittee Update

Mike Elliott of MassDEP reported on the most recent Construction and Demolition Materials (C&D) [Subcommittee](#) meeting, which occurred just prior to the SWAC meeting. Mike discussed C&D trends in the context of the Solid Waste Master Plan, examining recycling and disposal rates and looking for opportunities with specific materials (including bulky waste and wood).

Q: Do you have totals for how much C&D was created in Massachusetts, or just the disposal numbers? SWMP 2020 goals were based on total C&D and diverting more.

A: MassDEP has the disposal data as well as data on the materials handled by C&D processors and transfer stations. MassDEP does not have data on C&D materials managed outside of these facilities.

National Investments in Recycling

Bridget Croke of Closed Loop Partners (CLP) gave an overview of the projects the Closed Loop Fund (CLF) is supporting throughout the country, as well as opportunities provided by CLP's other funding vehicles. For more information, see the presentation posted with this meeting summary.

Q: You mentioned it's a \$100M fund, of which \$25M has been invested. Massachusetts has a Recycling Loan Fund that deposits principal payments back into the fund with interest paying for management of the fund. How does this one work?

A: Management of the Close Loop Fund is covered by interest. Anything that comes back in the first five years goes back into the fund. After five years the money will go to pay back the investors and a decision will be made about whether to continue the fund beyond that point.

Q: Is EPA's WARM model used for CLP's greenhouse gas (GHG) calculations?

A: Yes, CLP uses EPA's WARM model to calculate GHG benefits from recycling.

Q: Is the fund investing in organics and AD?

A: The CLF is primarily focused on building the infrastructure to manage packaging waste, from easy to process materials to those that are more difficult, like flexible packaging. However, they have discussed potentially funding organics projects in the future.

Q: Has CLP funded any “dirty MRF” operations?

A: No, not at this time, as no one has brought forth a project that the CLF believes would be financially sustainable and effective for recycling. This could be considered if someone could develop a dirty MRF proposal that would meet CLP’s funding criteria.

Q: Why are you investing in single stream, and at the same time trying to fix it at the back end? (cleaning up contaminated materials at the MRF following single stream collection)

A: CLP is open to funding both single stream and dual stream recycling operations. Single stream recycling has been shown to be effective at increasing participation and recycling capture, so CLP is also interested in maximizing the effectiveness of single stream operations.

Q: What does CLP consider a saleable and replicable project?

A: For instance, if there is a municipal recycling program that wants to invest in multi-family recycling and we can prove that model works, we want to be able to replicate it in other communities. The other example: if we invest in a private company that uses post-consumer recycled content, they may not be able to share their technology, but their operation may be scalable in the sense that it can be expanded.

Q: How about cleaning up glass recycling streams?

A: CLP recently did a study on glass clean-up. If glass is in the system, there are some systems that work to better improve the economics for MRFs, while cleaning up the glass. We’re looking at glass technology at MRFs right now, and what technologies would make financial sense to invest in at MRFs to clean up glass. We haven’t taken a stance on whether or not glass should be in the stream, but have looked at the best ways to manage it if it is in.

Q: How about examples of using glass in roads?

A: When we invest in a company, we need to do a lot of diligence to see if it will work. I’m happy to look at what CLP is able to share about glass (not sure what can be shared due to non-disclosure agreements).

Q: Are you working with manufacturers to convince them to adjust some of the products they make to make them more recyclable?

A: It’s not what CLP does as an organization, but we do interact with 11 funding companies that manufacture products and packaging and can potentially increase recycled content in their packaging.

Rethinking Food Waste through Economics & Data

Chris Cochran of ReFED presented on his organization's work to shine a light on food waste reduction solutions that are cost effective, scalable, feasible, and data-driven on a national level. Their suite of tools includes a policy finder map and innovator database, among other resources. For more information, please see the presentation posted with this meeting summary.

Q: Does the policy database include states that have tax credits or incentives for food donation?

A: Yes, it does include tax credit information for states that have it.

Updating the Solid Waste Master Plan: A Review of the 2010-2020 Plan

John Fischer of MassDEP reviewed MassDEP's implementation of the 2020 Solid Waste Master Plan (SWMP), highlighting progress made towards the SWMP goals and the status of major program and policy participation. This presentation is intended to provide a foundation for initial discussions on developing the 2030 SWMP. MassDEP will begin discussions on development of the 2030 SWMP at the October SWAC meeting.

Q: Will there be a SWMP subcommittee of the SWAC?

A: MassDEP will utilize the SWAC as well as the existing C&D and Organics Subcommittee to provide input into the development of the 2030 SWMP. MassDEP expects to create a subcommittee or hold a series of meetings specifically on management capacity issues.

Q: Most of the public and businesses have a lack of understanding and awareness of Massachusetts waste bans. How will SWMP address lack of waste ban knowledge?

A: MassDEP believes that raising awareness about waste bans requires a multi-faceted approach. Part of this is continuing to be active with waste ban inspections and enforcement work. MassDEP is also engaging the RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts program to develop sector based guidance and outreach materials on waste bans. This will include retailers, and possibly other sectors like property management companies, restaurants and hospitality.

Comment: ReFED is coming out with action guides on food waste over the summer. This can be plugged into the work of MassDEP without any additional work.

Comment: Cardboard will be a growing issue in the residential waste stream as more items are delivered from online shopping (e.g. Amazon).

Q: Is the export of organics-rich material from MSW currently on the same plane as in-state separation of organics for energy?

A: MassDEP's goal is to divert organic materials from disposal, whether in state or out of state. MassDEP works to support all methods of diverting food materials from disposal, whether up-front waste reduction, donation, composting, animal feed or anaerobic digestion.

Comment: ReFED: Food recovery and food recycling are not at competition at this point. Lots of food can be recovered to feed people and lots of food can be recovered for recycling at the same time.

Q: Some industry people have talked about landfill gas to energy: leaving food in landfills for landfill gas projects. How does MassDEP view this option?

A: MassDEP supports implementing landfill gas to energy systems at existing landfills, but believes that managing food materials in other facilities such as anaerobic digestion are preferable to landfills with gas recovery systems.

Q: Does MassDEP want private sector input toward the development of the Solid Waste Master Plan? How will this input be obtained?

A: Yes, MassDEP is interested in input from all stakeholder perspectives in developing the SWMP. MassDEP expects to engage in an extensive series of stakeholder discussions over the coming months, including both SWAC and Subcommittee meetings. There will be extensive opportunities for stakeholders to have input into the development of the 2030 SWMP.

Comment: This format (today's meeting) is not effective to develop ideas and get input. The process leading up to the 2014 Commercial Organics Ban was a good framework for getting input; SWMP should look like that process.

Response: The SWMP presentation at this meeting was primarily intended to share information on the status of implementing the 2020 SWMP. As mentioned above, MassDEP expects to have extensive opportunities for stakeholders to have input into the development of the 2030 SMWP. MassDEP expects that this process will be similar to past MassDEP stakeholder processes such as the Organics Subcommittee process that supported the development of the Commercial Organics Ban. MassDEP expects that future SWAC meetings relative to the SWMP development will be more focused on obtaining stakeholder input.

Q: Is the purpose of SWAC for MassDEP to share information to attendees or to receive advice from SWAC stakeholders?

A: Both. MassDEP relies on the SWAC meetings and process to share information with stakeholders as well as to obtain stakeholder input into policy development.

Q: Is there a target date to issue the draft plan?

A: MassDEP has a general timeframe in mind, but does not have a specific date set at this time.

Q: From a municipal side, how will the SWMP incorporate the multi-family housing or managed properties?

A: Multi-family is a challenging sector, and it hasn't been fully addressed yet. MassDEP's model municipal recycling regulations can help level playing field for recycling. Waste ban compliance

and enforcement can have a role in overall compliance. We will look into sector-based fact sheets for commercial property, and possibly for residential property managers.

Q: Has MassDEP considered engaging a third party facilitator to guide SWAC discussions?

A: MassDEP has not considered that approach at this time. MassDEP expects to follow the same approach as past SWMP and SWAC policy development processes which were conducted by MassDEP staff.